

SUBJECT: Currituck Sound Feasibility Study Team Meeting

On 29 September 2004 at 10:30 am, a Currituck Study Team Meeting was held to discuss the status of the Currituck Sound Feasibility Study scopes of work and agree on the next steps. Attachment 1 is the meeting agenda. The following is a list of participants:

Name	Organization	Phone
	U.S. Geological Survey	(919) 571-4048
	Pasquotank River Basin Regional Council (Retired NCWRC/NMFS)	(252) 338-3557
	USACE, Engineer, Research, & Development Center (ERDC), Duck, NC	(252)261-6840 ext. 229
	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Back Bay National Wildlife Refuge	(757) 721-2412
	USACE, ERDC, Vicksburg, Mississippi	(601) 634-3617
	USACE, ERDC, Vicksburg, Mississippi	(601) 634-3178
	Planning Services Section, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Wilmington	(910) 251-4706
	Project Management Branch USACE, Wilmington	(910) 251-4055
	Environmental Resources Section, USACE, Wilmington	(910) 251-4713
	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Back Bay National Wildlife Refuge	(757) 721-2412
	Albemarle-Pamlico National Estuary Program	(252) 446-6481
	Elizabeth City State University	(252) 335-3425
	North Carolina Division of Marine Fisheries	(256) 796-1322
	Elizabeth City State University, SAV Monitoring Program	(252) 335-3595
	Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation	(757) 924-2468
	Project Manager, Project Management Branch USACE, Wilmington	(910) 251-4831
	City of Virginia Beach, Department of Agriculture	(757) 727-8637
	North Carolina Division of Water Resources	(919) 715-5422
	Elizabeth City State University, SAV Monitoring Program	(252) 339-2459
	Albemarle-Pamlico Estuary Study	(252) 453-2545
	Coastal, Hydrology and Hydraulics Section, USACE, Wilmington	(910) 251-4547
	Currituck County	(252) 232-0719
	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Back Bay National Wildlife Refuge	(757) 721-2412
	North Carolina Division of Water Resources	(919) 715-5446
	North Beach Sun	(252) 449-2222
	Hampton Roads Planning District Commission	(757) 420-8300
	Planning Services Section, USACE, Wilmington	(910) 251-4694
	Environmental Resources Section, USACE, Wilmington	(910) 251-4746

1. Welcome and Introductions: Mr. Yates Barber, Pasquotank River Basin Regional Council, welcomed everyone to Elizabeth City and stated he was excited to see the interest in restoring the Currituck Sound. Mr. Sam Colella, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), stated he was impressed with the productivity of the work groups in a short period of time and his goal is to execute this project quickly, efficiently, smartly, and at the least cost. Mr. John Morris, North Carolina Division of Water Resources (NCDWR), stated he was impressed with the discussions in the work group meetings the past two days, the strength of the effort, and the amount of knowledge brought to the table. Mr. Morris plans to focus on good results and steer the Study in the right direction as there is not an infinite source of funding. Ms. Lisa Hetherman, USACE, Study Project Manager, thanked everyone for their participation and requested everyone state their name, affiliated organization, which work groups they are working on, and what part of the Study is of interest. Introductions were made.

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2. Public Involvement Work Group: Tara Williams, USACE, Public Involvement Work Group Leader, stated that since the last Currituck Team Meeting the Public Involvement Work group had been e-mailing a spreadsheet cataloging ideas on how to include the public in this study. In addition, a conference call was held at 8 am on September 15. A draft scope of work (SOW) was prepared which includes the tasks discussed during this call. The tasks include: planning public meeting (Spring timeframe tentative); providing teachers in Currituck County information on the Study and allowing students to choose aspects of the Currituck Study as a Senior Project; coordinating with physics and biology teachers in Currituck County to determine the best time to have representatives from the modeling work group and the fisheries, shellfish, SAV's, and waterfowl groups talk with students (hope to have talks fit the subject matter in the lesson plans and curriculum); and preparing a Currituck Study video possibly providing an opportunity for the high school students in a video production course to help. Col. Alexander will participate in an interview with the Chairman of the Currituck County Board of Commissioners on December 6. This interview will be a live broadcast. A plan for brochures, posters, and other visual advertisements will be worked on as well.

A draft write up for the "Virginian Pilot", the Currituck County "Report to Citizens," and the local radio station was prepared prior to the 9 am 29 September work group meeting. The group reviewed it prior to the meeting and discussed changes during the meeting. The write up will include an invitation for the public to call Ms. Tara Williams if they have information on the Study area. Ms. Williams asked what type of information would be useful to the other work groups. Participants agreed that historic weather changes and affects, historic mapping, fishing logs, and photos would be useful. Mr. Colella asked about using a survey, and Ms. Williams agreed to look into this. The draft scope of work was also reviewed at the 29 September meeting. The group agreed the scope of work would be complete by November.

The timing of a public meeting was discussed and several participants warned against having a public meeting until we have enough information for the public. If we have the meeting too early, they may get the impression that we are off in too many directions and will spend years to just study this area. Some felt the spring timeframe may be too soon. The team agreed that we will be able to predict a timeframe better after the next meeting.

Ms. Liz Noble, Elizabeth City State University, stated that the upcoming SAV hunts will be a good way to share information with the public on the Currituck Study and will provide information for the Study. Mr. Noah Hill, Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation, mentioned that the public does not like the word "study" so the work group agreed to using the words "restoration project" when referring to the Currituck Study to let the public know that the goal is restoration implementation and not another study lacking follow up action. A request was made to place a link from the Albemarle-Pamlico National Estuary Program and the Chesapeake Bay sites to the Study website.

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3. Shellfish, SAV's, Waterfowl, and Fisheries (SSWF) Work Group Update: Mr. Chuck Wilson, USACE, SSWF Work Group Leader, introduced Mr. Allen Davis as a Co-Leader for the SSWF group. Mr. Wilson reported that a work group conference call was held on August 31. The work group is currently revising the scope of work in the Project Management Plan to include the information gathered (existing data, data gaps, studies required) during this call. Things discussed during the August 31 call include the importance of including the Back Bay area in the Study, the aerial photography, and topographic sources. Mr. Wilson brought the J. L. Sincock Reports for people to look at. This cooperative study was performed by the Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife, North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission, and the Virginia Commission of Game and Inland Fisheries from 1958 to 1964. There are three volumes, one on fish studies, one on waterfowl, and another on vegetation. Mr. Mike Wicker with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) sent these documents to the USACE. These documents will be scanned and placed on the Study website and a few hard copies will be made for the work groups.

Mr. Wilson stated that at the 9 am 29 September work group meeting, participants agreed to subdivide work according to specialty, with someone to serve as coordinator for each subgroup. Subgroup areas and coordinators are as follows:

1. **Vegetation**, including SAV, forests, wetlands, invasive; native vs. exotic phragmites
Coordinators: Kyle Hall and Chuck Wilson
2. **Survey/GIS**
Coordinator: Jim Jacaruso
3. **Fish**
Coordinators: Kevin Dockendorf and Lynn Henry
4. **Waterfowl**
Coordinators: Bob Noffsinger and John Gallegos

Colonial nesting water birds, snails, and clams will be included in the Study within the sub groups.

4. Hydrologic/Hydrodynamics and Water Quality Modeling Work Group Update: Mr. Hasan Pourtaheri, USACE, Hydrologic/Hydrodynamics and Water Quality Modeling Work Group Leader, reported that the work group has shared ideas on modeling techniques through phone calls, emails, and the SSWF conference call on August 31. The group also met on 28 September for a workshop to develop consensus on a "roadmap" (plan of study) and the modeling studies that are needed, identify data requirements to support these modeling studies and other analyses, and to fine-tune the scope of work in the Project Management Plan to reflect the plan of study developed. Attachment 2 is the hand out Mr. Pourtaheri provided that summarizes the work from the 28 September meeting. He referenced this handout and stated that the work group agrees that the Currituck Sound is part of a larger system. Therefore, we should look beyond the Sound (diagnostic) to have the right boundary conditions, and then, look within these

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boundaries. Mr. Pourtaheri emphasized that now is the time to prepare a “roadmap” for the Study and identify what we need. Mr. Pourtaheri stated that in order to establish the condition we hope to restore to we need to model the existing condition and define a baseline condition picking a combination of desired parameters through input from the SSWF group.

Ms. Kathleen Fisher, Elizabeth City State University, mentioned there is light attenuation research for Currituck. Water clarity, pH, and DO were measured. Mr. Morris stated that historical data should be organized and suggested a plan for the storage of data. Participants agreed that a plan for data storage would be a good item for the next meeting agenda.

5. Discussion of Phase 2 Scopes of Work and Assignments: Ms. Hetherman led this discussion. The results are as follows: Work groups will meet (conference call) by 15 October to work on phase 2 scopes of work. Phase 2 scopes of work will be submitted to the project manager by 31 October. The modeling group needs until January to have a final phase 2 scope of work with costs. The project manager and lead planner will determine how tasks and costs fit FY 05 budget, create recommended project schedule, and distribute this budget and schedule to the Executive Committee (Col. Alexander and Mr. Morris) for their review. The Sponsor (Mr. Morris) may request the Sponsor’s Advisory Committee to review outstanding issues. The Sponsor’s Advisory Committee will continue to be involved in the Study and review the data collection and analysis as it is accomplished.

6. Review of Project Schedule and Funds: Ms. Hetherman reported that a letter requesting Sponsor funds for Fiscal Year 2005 was sent. The State of North Carolina’s Work-In-Kind estimate of \$26,500 for Fiscal Year 2005 has been received, and a check in the amount of \$106,500 from the State of North Carolina has been received. The total amount of Federal dollars that can be made available for the Study in Fiscal Year 2005 is \$133,000. The State of North Carolina together can contribute a total of \$133,000 as well. This brings the total dollars for the Study in Fiscal Year 2005 to \$266,000. The required dollars for Fiscal Year 2005 have not been determined as the SOW’s for phase 2 are necessary to determine costs for each work group. As soon as all the phase 2 SOW’s have been received, the Study schedule will be reviewed. Currently work groups are working in phase 1 finding where data exists and identifying data gaps. Some work groups are beginning to determine what studies are required and identifying these studies in a SOW for phase 2. Attachment 3 is the funding handout Ms. Hetherman provided for the meeting.

7. Summary of Action Items: Mr. Colella suggested that a list of available data and required data be prepared. Ms. Hetherman noted that the groups were working on this for their SOW’s. She suggested that herself and Ms. Williams could put together a separate list.

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Mr. Morris and others will work on a data storage plan for the next meeting, and the public involvement work group will find ways to establish the website links.

Ms. Hetherman suggested that work groups should complete phase 2 SOW's by 31 October to have them approved at the November Currituck Team Meeting. Some work groups may start phase 2 work in October and the rest will be ready to begin after the November meeting.

8. Next Meeting: Ms. Hetherman suggested the next meeting be on November 9. Mr. Morris requested that the group hold off on scheduling a meeting. He stated that November would be too soon as a lot of work remains to be done to get from where we are now to carefully drafted RFP's. Mr. Morris would like to be sure we have a worthwhile agenda before we request committee members to commit time to a meeting.

Mr. Colella stated how well it worked having the work groups meet prior to the main team meeting. Ms. Hetherman agreed that this worked great and provides each group the opportunity to prepare their presentation for the main meeting. Work groups were encouraged to continue communication between meetings and not wait for the work group meetings to make progress.

Ms. Hetherman mentioned that it may be possible to have a meeting by video teleconferencing (VTC) as Virginia Tech., the College of the Albemarle, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and those located in Raleigh all have VTC capability. This idea was brought up by a few team members during the September 15 conference call.

9. Closing Comments: Mr. Colella stated that the work groups put in a great amount of effort. He encouraged them to have another meeting prior to the next Currituck Team meeting. He recommended that we have a good communication plan for internal team members and with the Sponsor. Mr. Colella requested that a data collection list be put together including the data that we have and the data we need to collect. He also suggested that the Study needed some oversight to look at the data needed for all three groups so there is no duplication of effort. He reminded all to remember that hunting and fishing clubs may have useful data.

Lisa L. Hetherman
Project Manager